

Bledlow Ridge School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Date of last review: November 2021

Date of next review: November 2023

At Bledlow Ridge School, we are aware that pupils may be bullied in any school or setting, and recognise that preventing, raising awareness and consistently responding to any cases of bullying should be a priority to ensure the safety and well-being of our pupils. In line with the Equality Act 2010 it is essential that our school:

- Eliminates unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advances equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Fosters good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This policy is closely linked with our Behaviour, Child Protection and Peer-On-Peer Abuse Policies.

We are determined to promote and develop a school ethos where bullying behaviour is regarded as unacceptable, to ensure a safe and secure environment is sustained for all pupils.

We aim for all pupils to reach their potential academically, socially and personally through learning and playing in a safe and secure environment.

At Bledlow Ridge School School, we discuss what bullying is, as well as incidents we would not describe as bullying, with all pupils through assemblies and PSHE lessons. We agree that:

- Bullying is usually physical hurting, name calling, nasty looks or leaving people out.
- Bullying usually happens when the relationship is imbalanced.
- Bullying is usually on-going.

Types of Bullying

Cyber-Bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual bullying', which can occur in and outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying which can happen beyond the school day into home and private space, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content.

Racist Bullying

This refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that make the person feel unwelcome marginalised and excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity culture, faith community, national origin or national status.

Homophobic Bullying

This occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people.

Vulnerable Groups

We recognise that some groups of pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying, including:

- Looked After Children
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children
- Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)
- Children from ethnic minorities
- Children entitled to Free School Meals
- Children for whom English is an Additional Language
- Children who are perceived to be gay, lesbian or bisexual

Signs of Bullying

Staff should be vigilant in looking out for signs of bullying or other child protection issues including:

Physical: unexplained bruised, scratches, cuts, missing belongings, damaged clothes, or schoolwork, loss of appetite, stomach aches, headaches, bedwetting.

Emotional: losing interest in school, withdrawn, secretive, unusual shows of temper, refusal to say why unhappy, high level of anxiety, mood swings, tearfulness for no reason, lack of confidence, headaches and stomach aches, signs of depression.

Behavioural: asking to be taken to school, coming home for lunch, taking longer to get home, asks for more money, using different routes to school, 'losing' more items than usual, sudden changes in behaviour and mood, concentration difficulties, truancy.

Bullying Prevention

Preventing and raising awareness of bullying is an essential to keeping incidents in our school to a minimum. Through assemblies as well as PSHE lessons, pupils are given regular opportunities to discuss what bullying is, as well as incidents we would not describe as bullying, such as two friends falling out, or a one-off argument. Pupils are taught to tell an adult in school if they are concerned that someone is being bullied.

To aid the prevention of bullying we aim to be kind, helpful and polite to others, be respectful of others; their opinions, feelings and property and respect everyone's right to speak and to be heard.

Behaviour Policy

Our Behaviour Policy includes rewards and sanctions which are used consistently, alongside positive relationships, to prevent inappropriate behaviour, and promote positive behaviour.

Responding to Bullying

In any case of alleged bullying, either the Classteacher, the Headteacher, or a senior member of staff should first establish the facts, and build an accurate picture of events over time, through speaking to the alleged perpetrator(s), victim(s) and adult witnesses, as well as parents and pupil witnesses if necessary and appropriate.

If the allegation of bullying is upheld, the Headteacher (or senior leader) should seek to use a restorative approach with the perpetrator(s) and victim(s) together. The perpetrator(s) should fully understand the consequences of their actions on the victim(s), and apologise without reservation. Both parties should be clear that a repeat of these behaviours will not be acceptable.

Action taken will be in line with our behaviour policy, and may include:

- Explanation why the inappropriate behaviour is unacceptable
- Reparation of damaged relationships
- Restorative Approaches
- Time away from an activity
- Meeting with staff, parent and child
- Missing another activity
- Formal letter home from the Head of School expressing concerns
- Time out from the classroom
- Pastoral support plan

In cases where there is no improvement following the above measures the following actions may be considered:

- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

All bullying incidents must be recorded. This will be done using the Bullying Log sheets (see appendix C). These are stored on the T-Drive and are started when an allegation is first made. They contain details of the initial allegation, notes from any investigation and any actions taken. Any further incidents regarding the allegation are added to these documents to give a chronology. These are kept as living documents that can be accessed and updated by all staff. Parents of both parties should be informed.

If the situation does not improve, the Headteacher (or senior leader) should meet with the parent(s) of the bullying child(ren) and agree clear expectations and boundaries which would be shared with the pupils involved. Any further incidents should lead to intervention (e.g. through outside agencies), further monitoring, support and punitive sanctions as deemed necessary. Any necessary action should be taken until the bullying has stopped.

We believe that everyone involved in the life of Bledlow Ridge School must take responsibility for promoting a common anti-bullying approach.

We all agree to:

- tell
- be supportive of each other
- provide positive role models
- convey a clear understanding that we disapprove of unacceptable behaviour
- be fully involved in the development of the anti-bullying policy and support anti-bullying practice
- support each other in the implementation of this policy

Staff have agreed to:

- Provide children with a framework of behaviour including rules which support the whole school policy. Emphasise and behave in a respectful and caring manner to children/young people and colleagues, to set a good tone and help create a positive atmosphere
- Raise awareness of bullying, including cyber bullying, through the curriculum including activities, stories, role-play, discussion, peer support, school/children's council, etc.

- Through the Head of School, to keep the governing body well informed regarding issues concerning behaviour management

Staff will report incidents of bullying to a member of the Senior Leadership Team and have a vital role to play as they are at the forefront of behaviour management and supporting children's sense of well-being. They have the closest knowledge of the children in their care, and should build up a relationship involving mutual support, trust and respect.

Governors have a duty to:

- Be fully informed on matters concerning anti-bullying
- Regularly monitor incident reports and actions taken to be aware of the effectiveness of this policy
- Identify one governor to be the nominated 'link' within the leadership structure.

Through the development and implementation of this policy, we at Bledlow Ridge School hope that all children, parents/carers and staff will:

- Feel confident that everything is being done to make our school a safe and secure environment in which quality learning can then take place
- Feel supported in reporting incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying
- be reassured that if any member of our school 'tells', they will be listened to with sensitivity and respect, and action will be taken.

This policy is part of our commitment to safeguarding children. It should be read in conjunction with our other safeguarding policies and procedures.

The school will review this policy every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. This policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

APPENDIX A

GUIDANCE FOR ALL STAFF

Before recording an incident, it may be useful for staff to consider the following:

- Has the incident with the same person or people occurred several times within a reasonably short period of time?
- Is it a disagreement or the result of play which has got out of hand?
- Is it a 'falling out of friends' matter?
- Are you sure that the child has not had at least partial responsibility for the incident?
- Can you recognise a pattern to the incidents?
- Have you noticed any change in the child's behaviour?

Although incidents may not be bullying, they should always be followed up thoroughly in school and dealt with appropriately with timeliness and sensitivity.

All incidents of bullying (as defined in our policy) will be recorded by the school.

APPENDIX B

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Whenever a bullying incident is discovered, we will go through a number of steps. The exact nature of each step will be adapted to suit the nature and severity of the incident, and the response of those involved. Before progressing it may be useful for parents/carers to consider the following:-

- Has the incident with the same person or people occurred several times within a reasonably short period of time?
- Is it a disagreement or the result of play which has got out of hand?
- Is it a 'falling out of friends' matter?
- Are you sure your child has not had at least partial responsibility for the incident?
- Can you recognise a pattern to the incidents?
- Have you noticed any change in your child's behaviour?

Although incidents may not be bullying they should always be followed up thoroughly in school and dealt with appropriately. When a bullying incident has come to the attention of Hemyock Primary School, it will always be taken seriously, investigated and actioned. However, we cannot report back to the parent/carer of any child except their own.

The school will:

- Talk the incident through with all parties involved
- Support the person who has been bullied to express their feelings
- Supporting the person displaying the bullying behaviour to express their feelings
- Explore the use of Restorative Approaches
- Discuss which rule(s) have been broken
- Discuss strategies for making amends

Actions will be in line with our behaviour policy, and may include:

- Explanation why the inappropriate behaviour is unacceptable
- Reparation of damaged relationships
- Restorative Approaches
- Time away from an activity
- Meeting with staff, parent and child
- Missing another activity
- Formal letter home from the Head of School expressing concerns
- Time out from the classroom
- Pastoral support plan

In cases where there is no improvement following the above measures the following actions may be considered:

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APPENDIX C

Bullying Record Log

BULLYING INCIDENT LOG		Name of teacher completing form:			
Target's Name (s):			Age:	Year:	
Gender:	Ethnicity:	SEN Stage:	Home Language:	Looked after child?	Pupil Premium?
Date of incident:					
Time of incident:					
Locations of incidents:					
SECTION A: Target's Account/Concerns of parents/carers:					
Name of alleged perpetrator(s):			Age	Year:	
Nature of incident (including details of injury or damage to property etc)					
Bold any elements that apply: Physical Verbal Indirect Cyberbullying					
Bold any types of bullying that apply: Racial Religious Cultural Sexist Transphobic Homophobic SEN Disability					
Any other circumstances (eg Gifted and Talented, health condition etc)?					
Parents of alleged target(s) informed (if they are not raising the concern)			Date:	Time:	
SECTION B: Accounts of those involved					
Alleged perpetrators accounts of the incident(s):					

Witnesses/bystanders accounts of the incident(s): (including names and ages)						
Parents of alleged perpetrators(s) informed:				Date:	Time:	
SECTION C: Action Taken						
Details of immediate action taken:						
SECTION D: Ongoing Record						
Use this section to add any further occasions of incidents reported by either children or parents. This may be issues from playtimes, arguments in the class or further meetings with parents. Please log any action taken after each incident logged.						

Appendix E - Responding to Incidents of Bullying - The Support Group Method

This appendix outlines the restorative processes and approaches the school will take when responding to incidents of bullying. This appendix includes an outline of *The Support Group Method*.

The Support Group Method - Introduction

The Support Group Method, developed by Barbara Maines and George Robinson, was first outlined in *Educational Psychology in Practice* (1991). The approach addresses bullying by forming a support group of children and young people who have been bullying and/or have been involved as bystanders. It uses a problem-solving approach, without apportioning blame, giving responsibility to the group to solve the problem and to report back at a subsequent review meeting.

For further information, see 5A The Support Group Method and 5B Recording Sheets for the Support Group Method

Step one - talk with and listen to the target

Aims of this step:

- To understand the pain experienced by the target
- To explain the method and gain permission to proceed
- To discuss who will make up The Support Group
- To agree what will be recounted to the group.

Step two - convene a meeting with the people involved

The facilitator arranges to meet with the group of children who have been involved and suggested by the target. A group of six to eight children works well. This is an opportunity for the facilitator to use their judgement to balance the group so that helpful and reliable children are included alongside those whose behaviour has been causing distress. The aim is to use the strengths of the group members to bring about the best outcome.

Step three - explain the problem

The facilitator starts by telling the group that s/he is worried about the target who is having a very hard time at the moment. By asking the group to listen to his/her own worries, the facilitator can divert some suspicion or irritation which might be directed towards the target. The facilitator recounts the story of the target's unhappiness and may use a piece of writing or a drawing to emphasise the target's distress. At no time does the facilitator discuss the details of the incidents or allocate blame to the group.

Step four - share responsibility

When the account is finished the listeners may look downcast or uncomfortable and be uncertain about the reason for the meeting. Some may be anxious about possible punishment. The facilitator makes a change in the mood by stating explicitly that:

- no-one is in trouble or going to be punished.
- it is the facilitator's responsibility to help the target to be happy and safe but they cannot do it of the group.
- the group has been convened to help solve the problem **Step five - ask the group members for their ideas** without the help

Group members are usually genuinely moved by the account of the target's distress and relieved that they are not in trouble. Each member of the group is then encouraged to suggest a way in which the target could be helped to feel happier.

Ideas are owned by the group members and not imposed by the facilitator. The facilitator makes positive responses and does not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

Step six - leave it up to them

The facilitator ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. S/he thanks them, expresses confidence in a positive outcome and arranges to meet with them again to see how things are going.

Step seven - meet them again

About a week later, the facilitator discusses with the target how things have been going. S/he then meets with the group to discuss how things have been going for them. This allows the facilitator to monitor the bullying and keeps the children involved in the process.